



## FRAMINGHAM PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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### MEMORANDUM

To: Valerie Mulvey, Acting Town Manager

From: Local TIP Committee

CC: Board of Selectmen

Re: Local TIP Project Priorities

Date: March 14, 2006

The deadline for communities to submit project proposals to the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization for inclusion in 2007 – 2011 Boston Transportation Improvement Program is March 21, 2006. Your Local TIP Committee comprised of Ginger Esty, John Stasik, Peter Sellers, William Sedewitz, Jay Grande, Ann Welles and Kathleen Bartolini met to review the status of current transportation projects, state and federal funding now available and develop submission recommendations. Given the fact that Mass. was provided a much higher earmark on which to base its planning, and then was unexpectedly hit with a 20% reduction in federal transportation funds well into federal fiscal year 06, we realize that fewer projects will be implemented than was originally programmed. In order to file an amended TIP that was fiscally balanced to revised earmark, the MPO had to cut projects. Then they received yet another revised instruction letter from the Federal Highway Administration that stated that due to the Boston region being an area that does not comply with EPA ozone standards, the MPO must also file a revised TIP for federal fiscal year 07 and that TIP needed to be adjusted downward by another 13%.

The result of all these cuts is that the 2007-2011 TIP is very competitive. MPO members did not automatically push 07 projects out to make room for the deleted 06 projects. Instead they will now compete with all the new municipal submissions filed by March 21, 2006. However, they did state that they will try to insert 06 projects and then deleted 07 ones unless other submissions scored much higher against the selection criteria. The good news out of all of this is our Franklin St. Reconstruction project has survived all those cuts and should be advertised by the State this summer, but no later than Sept. 30, 2006.

Bridge work was also similarly impacted. Again there is good news for Framingham in 06. The Main Street Bridge will at last go forward. It has already been advertised and hopefully will get an authorization to proceed as soon as spring is officially here. The Rt. 9 Bridge over the Sudbury River will also go forward as planned.

However the 2007 bridge news is not as good. The Central St. Bridge once scheduled for 06 is now a fall 2007 bridge, and the Winter St. Bridges (at Gate House) and the Fountain St. Bridge have all been pushed forward to 2008.

Given all of the above information, the status of our other DPW projects and Chapter 90 funding, the Local TIP Committee is recommending no new projects be added to our list and that the project forms we filed last year be resubmitted with the same prioritization as last year. Thus we are recommending:

1. Edgel Road Corridor Reconstruction from the Main St./Franklin St. intersection north to Nobscot and the intersection with Water St.
2. Concord St. (Rt. 126) Reconstruction from 126 Bridge over Rt. 9 to Lincoln St.

3. Rts. 126/135 Intersection Congestion Solution
4. Reconstruction of Hollis St. (Rt. 126) from Ashland town line to Rt. 135

Although we plan to submit substantially the same forms for each project as we did last year, the evaluation process has been slightly tweaked from three grading levels of high, medium or low to 5 gradations. The intent is to decrease the clumping of 70 – 80% of the projects into the same “medium” score from which only a few are selected for inclusion in the TIP. That made the selection process less transparent and open to protest. This week Bill Sedewitz, Lily Pollans and I will work on refining the prior forms to better our score. This is especially true re Edgel Rd. Corridor which has been trying for many years to make it into the funded category. If we cannot get this moved into the third year of the TIP, we believe the Town will need to drop this from our TIP list and instead do at least the intersections with Chapter 90 funding, because these intersections grow more dangerous year every year we delay.